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ABSTRACT

This issue, the third in a series on the demographic forces shaping public education in the United States, examines the effect of the influx of Hispanic American and Indian immigrants. The first section, "Una Dia Nuevo for Schools," discusses how schools must adjust as Hispanic immigrants fan out to areas beyond those where they have traditionally settled, noting issues to consider when educating limited English speaking students and discussing various approaches (transitional bilingual education, immersion programs, English as a Second Language programs, and two-way bilingual education programs). It also discusses the need for literacy education and notes recent problems related to teacher shortage. The second section, "A Bilingual Day in the Life," follows one Dominican American high school student, examining his move from bilingual to English only courses and his use of Spanish versus English in conversation. The third section, "A Passage from India," explains that India has become one of the United States' largest sources of immigrants and notes that Indian immigrants tend to revere education and to discourage relationships between boys and girls until the children are much older than is standard in the United States. (SM)

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Un Día Nuevo for Schools Overview

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By Mary Ann Zehr
Education Week

2000 beyond
The Changing Face Of American Schools

No other ethnic or racial group will do more to change the makeup of American schools over the next quarter-century than Hispanics.

They're already the nation's largest minority group among children under 18; in 25 years, projections show, one in every four elementary school pupils will be Hispanic.

This historic trend presents challenges for schools. As a group, Hispanics perform well below average on national achievement tests, and their high school dropout rate is nearly four times that of their non-Hispanic white peers.

If educators want to prevent those statistics from persisting on an even larger scale than they do now, observers of the trend say, they need to act now.

One city that's been struggling with those issues is Providence, R.I., where 50 percent of the district's students now are of Latino origin, and many speak little or no English. How successfully the district addresses the needs of such students could provide a preview of how other school systems will fare.

Hispanics aren't the only minority group that's growing rapidly in U.S. schools, of course. This installment of *Education Week* 's series on the demographic forces shaping public education in the new century also looks at the influx of Indian immigrants in the Silicon Valley district of Fremont, Calif.

Funding for this series is provided in part by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Ford Foundation.

PHOTOS: Diana Lam last year became the first Hispanic superintendent ever hired by the Providence, R.I., schools, one of many districts where the percentage of Latino students has risen dramatically.
—Sevans

About This Series

Sept. 27, 2000, Children of Change: While the number and diversity of school-age children will grow, they will represent a smaller proportion of the total U.S. population.

Oct. 18, 2000, Remodeling Suburbia: As suburbs creep farther outward from the nation's cities, schools in the inner and outer rings will face new and disparate challenges.

Nov. 8, 2000, *Un D a Nuevo* for Schools: Schools will have to adjust as Hispanic immigrants fan out to areas beyond those where they have traditionally settled. Also: "A Passage From India."

Nov. 29, 2000: In more than half the states, at least one in five residents will be 65 or older in 2025. This aging of the population will raise new issues for educators.

Dec. 13, 2000: Child poverty will continue to challenge educators, as the ranks of working, but still poor, families swell.

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Un Día Nuevo for Schools

By Mary Ann Zehr
Education Week

Providence, R.I.
Lucille Furia, the principal at William D'Abate Elementary School here, holds up a thick manual detailing a set of academic standards for all the parents and students to see. "In education today, we have to set high expectations for our children," Furia says. "By the time your children reach 4th grade, they should have reached many of the standards in this book."

Then she passes the manual to a bilingual teacher standing next to her, who holds it up for a second time.

"*Las normas dicen lo que los alumnos deben saber y lo que pueden hacer,*" Jenny P. Prull says. ("The standards say what the students ought to know and be able to do.")

"It's important we form a partnership with you, the family, the children, of course, and us here at the school," Furia continues later, pausing for Prull to explain the importance of "*un pacto entre los padres y la escuela.* "

Fifteen years ago, D'Abate Elementary's open house might have included only a handful of Spanish-speaking families. Today, 64 percent of the K-5 school's students are Hispanic; for many of them, Spanish is the only language they speak fluently.

2000 beyond
The Changing Face Of American Schools

Un D?a Nuevo For Schools

Overview

▶ ***Un D?a Nuevo* for Schools** (includes: A Bilingual Day in the Life)

A Passage From India

This profound demographic change?found not only here in Rhode Island's capital but in hundreds of other communities nationwide? has made it more important than ever for educators to reach out to Hispanic students to help them succeed.

For more than two decades, Hispanics' test scores in reading, mathematics, and science have lagged behind those of non-Hispanic whites on the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Their high school dropout rate is twice that of blacks and nearly four times that of non- Hispanic whites. Not surprisingly they are also less likely to complete college than their non-Hispanic peers.

Those statistics would be distressing under any circumstances. But Hispanics are also growing faster than any other racial or ethnic group in the country?a trend that is one of the most significant forces shaping America and its schools in the 21st century. In 1998, Hispanics became the nation's largest minority group among children under 18, surpassing African-Americans. They now constitute 15 percent of the elementary school population and 13 percent of the secondary school population; in 25 years, one in every four children in U.S. elementary schools is expected to be of Latino origin.

CHARTS

A Changing Mix

Struggling in School

Uneven Growth

More on the Way

Destino :
The United States
Dropping Out

Citing those statistics, a presidential commission on Hispanic education called this fall on all sectors of American society to work toward raising the educational performance of all Hispanic students to the same level as that of other U.S. students by 2010. ("Panel Targets Hispanic Lag in Attainment," Oct. 4, 2000.)

"If we as a country do not make a commitment to the fastest-growing community in this country, we are jeopardizing its own future," says Guillermo Linares, the chairman of the commission and a member of the New York City Council.

Fanning Out

More immigrants of all races and ethnicities are entering the United States than at any time since the turn of the 20th century, largely because of changes in immigration laws.

But with Hispanics, other factors are at work as well. While the percentage of legal immigrants who are Latino hasn't changed in decades, illegal immigration from Spanish-speaking countries has increased. And once Hispanics move here, their numbers grow quickly; they have the highest fertility rate of any major racial or ethnic group in the nation, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Most of the nation's Hispanics are concentrated in five states: California, Texas, Florida, Illinois, and New York. But more and more, they're fanning out to cities like Providence.

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Many come here in the hope that Providence, a city of 150,000 on Narragansett Bay, will offer a better quality of life?a quieter place to raise a family, with less crime and more affordable housing?than some of the larger cities that often serve as their initial port of entry to the United States. There are plenty of jobs here that don't require proficiency in English or a high school diploma, such as polishing metalwork in jewelry factories, cutting up fish in food-processing plants, and staffing hotels and delis.

PROVIDENCE (R.I.) PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- **Enrollment:** 26,300
- **Student profile:** 50 percent Hispanic, 23 percent African-American, 17 percent non-Hispanic white, 9 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 1 percent American Indian
- **Percentage of students who receive free or reduced-price meals:** 80
- **Superintendent:** Diana Lam

And among undocumented immigrants, Providence is viewed as a place where the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service is less likely to track them down, notes Jose M. Gonzalez, a mainland-born Hispanic of Puerto Rican descent who directs the school district's office of equity and access.

Thanks in part to those factors, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that Rhode Island will have a greater percentage increase in school-age Latinos?56 percent?between now and 2015 than any other state. Already, Providence's Latino student population has grown from 27 percent of enrollment to 50 percent over the past decade.

How the 26,300- student district adjusts to the changes could provide a preview of the challenges that many other districts could face in the near future.

"This is an area where the Hispanic population is growing rapidly and there was not a large base to start with, and it is transforming the schools," says Roger C. Avery, an adjunct associate professor at the Population Studies and Training Center at Brown University here. "There are other cities where it is happening as well."

Such districts can expect to face some serious challenges, observes Raul Gonzalez, who was born in Puerto Rico and is the education policy analyst for the National Council of La Raza, a Hispanic advocacy organization.

"One of the things that is different in emerging areas as opposed to California and Texas, where Hispanics have been [for decades or centuries], is there isn't always the infrastructure set up to provide services for Hispanic families and students," Gonzalez says.

In particular, he adds, schools in emerging Latino communities are less likely to apply for federal grants under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which pays for programs to teach students English, or have bilingual employees who can communicate with parents.

Diana Lam, who last year became the first Hispanic superintendent ever hired by the district here, shares that view. A native of Peru, Lam served previously as the superintendent of the San Antonio schools.

"It's a younger population here?meaning fewer years in this country," Lam says in comparing her Rhode Island and Texas districts. "Educationally, it means we have to be up to snuff as far as first- and second-language opportunities."

'No English-- Nothing'

Typical of many Latino immigrant families moving to Providence is the route taken by Dinorah Cabrera and her daughter, Belcanyelli Fana, who registered for middle school in late September. Cabrera brought her daughter to the United States from the Dominican Republic when she was 2 weeks old and since then has lived with her in Boston and New York City, except for a one- year period when they returned to their homeland.

Providence now has the third-largest enclave of Dominican immigrants of any northeastern U.S. city, next to New York City and Boston.

Cabrera says she's seeking a quieter life in Providence than she and her daughter recently experienced in New York.

"You know how New York is," she says in English to the evaluator in the district's student-registration center who is testing Belcanyelli's English and Spanish abilities. "She's 13. That's why we moved here," she adds, in a tone that implies there's no need to elaborate further.

Belcanyelli is like many other students arriving at the center, not only in that she is Dominican and lived somewhere else in the United States before moving here?true of an estimated half the city's Dominican families?but also that she qualifies as limited-English-proficient and is more fluent in Spanish than in English.

In New York City, Belcanyelli was enrolled in transitional bilingual education, in which academic subjects are taught in a student's native tongue while he or she learns English, with the goal of moving the child to mainstream classes. The Providence bilingual-evaluation specialist, Peter J. Sclafani, suspects from his assessment of Belcanyelli's language abilities that she received more instruction in Spanish there than in English. "Sometimes, school systems fail to move students along," he says.

Bilingual education is an option for Spanish-speaking students in Providence, but Sclafani recommends that Belcanyelli enroll in an English-as-a-second-language program, where all instruction will be in English. Her mother agrees.

"The goal is to get students into the mainstream as soon as possible," Sclafani explains later. "When she gets into high school, she doesn't want to have Spanish as a crutch."

Nine-year-old Gabriela Antelo, a Bolivian girl who entered school the same week that Belcanyelli registered for classes, is typical of many other immigrant students coming to Providence in that she immigrated directly from her native country and will start learning English from square one.

A bus driver delivers Gabriela to the main office of Asa Messer Elementary School on a Monday morning, announcing: "This

is her first day of school. No English. Nothing."

Undaunted, the girl smiles and looks up at the adults in the office with warm brown eyes.

The secretary sends her to the 5th grade ESL classroom, as specified by the registration paper the girl is carrying. But in fact, the next day?after a slot for her opens up?she is reassigned to the bilingual track in another school.

And thus Gabriela begins her American education.

Range of Approaches

How students like Belcanyelli and Gabriela should be taught is a matter of great debate across the country.

Transitional bilingual education, the norm for many Spanish-speaking children since the late 1970s, has recently come under attack in several states because of concerns that students tend to languish in the programs instead of becoming proficient in English.

In California, voters approved a ballot initiative in 1998 that replaced most bilingual education programs with English-immersion programs, and a proposal for a similar law was on the state ballot in Arizona this week.

Many school districts with emerging populations of Latinos now offer only English-as-a-second-language programs, in which teachers use simplified English to teach academic subjects and English skills. Two-way bilingual education programs, in which students who are dominant in Spanish and those who are dominant in English receive instruction in both languages, usually in the same classroom, are also growing; U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley recently endorsed that approach.

Providence, a district where about one in every five students is deemed limited-English-proficient and 80 percent of those students are Spanish-speaking, offers the whole gamut of methods.

Schools here are designated to provide one or two of the various approaches. The district buses students to the school that offers the method most appropriate for their educational backgrounds if it's not provided in the public school closest to where they live.

Adriana Sanchez, a Guatemalan who moved to Providence seven years ago, says she enrolled her 5-year-old daughter in the transitional-bilingual-education track at D'Abate Elementary School because she wanted her to learn two languages.

Speaking in Spanish, she says: "At home, we speak only Spanish. For now, I want her to study in bilingual education. Later, she will study only in English."

But Beatriz Trejo, an immigrant from Mexico who came to Providence five years ago by way of Florida, says she was opposed to bilingual education for her 5-year-old son. She enrolled him in the regular kindergarten at D'Abate this year.

"I don't like bilingual," she says, after requesting to be interviewed in English rather than Spanish. "It's too hard for him to do homework in English and homework in Spanish."

Meanwhile, Socorro Gomez-Potter, a native of Mexico and the principal of Alfred A. Lima Sr. Elementary School here, is gradually phasing out the school's transitional-bilingual-education track and replacing it with a two-way bilingual education program for all students.

Transitional bilingual education is "very difficult to carry out, given that our teachers are Spanish- dominant and some of them are limited-English-proficient themselves," Gomez- Potter says. "Can you see the difficulty of developing English?"

Lam, the superintendent, strongly supports bilingual education, but she acknowledges some of the criticisms of the method.

Unfortunately, she says, "just about anything has passed as bilingual education," in part because some proponents of the method have been reluctant to collect data or conduct longitudinal studies to determine if their approach is effective.

In the worst-case scenario, she adds, "We say: 'We can't teach students to read in English yet because they are bilingual' or 'They can't do it' or 'They have to do ESL first or oral language.' By the same token, we don't teach them to read in Spanish, and they end up being illiterate in both languages."

Lam praises Providence educators for having done "a lot of work" already to ensure high-quality bilingual education and ESL programs. But she believes such classes can be strengthened, particularly at the high school level.

In two of the district's high schools with large concentrations of Latinos, fewer than 15 percent of 10th graders met the state's standards for reading on its standardized test this year. In the district overall, the scores of Hispanic 10th graders lagged behind those of black, non-Hispanic white, and Asian-American students in reading, writing, and mathematics?all of the subjects that were tested. More than twice as many whites as Hispanics in that grade met the state's standard for math skills, for example.

"I want to make sure the kids are reading, writing, and can solve problems," Lam says. "The expectations are no less for our Latino children. To have a lower level of expectations is the wrong message."

Focus on Literacy

The centerpiece of the district's efforts to address the needs of LEP students is a framework launched last year called the Language Instruction For Transition, or LIFT. The framework describes how decisions should be made to place students in bilingual education or ESL classes, criteria for measuring their progress in English, and projections for how much time they

should spend in the programs.

The document's attention to detail has helped Providence educators rise above the kinds of arguments on how best to serve LEP students that have brought stalemate in some other districts, and allowed the district to focus on improving all of its LEP programs, says Fran S. Mossberg, the director of the district's department of language and culture. As an administrator for LEP students since the early 1980s, she says she's seen the district's services for such students evolve from "loosey-goosey" to "thoughtful and clinical."

"Everything is benchmarked," Mossberg says about LIFT, which is also the name the district gives to its collective programs for LEP students. "We have rubrics, criteria, and validation studies."

Mossberg has put a lot of effort into promoting one of LIFT's central messages: Teachers need to spend more time having students with limited English proficiency read and write in class to develop strong literacy skills.

That push is being reinforced as Lam rolls out a new program to increase the literacy of all district students?not just those classified as LEP. The district has hired a literacy coach for each elementary school to promote reading and writing; eventually, every school, even at the high school level, will have such a coach.

To Lam, there's no better way to combat high dropout rates than to teach every child to read.

"Literacy is a long-term strategy for ensuring success," the superintendent says. "Students start dropping out in middle school?they start tuning out. My belief is if a child experiences success in school, and what we offer is engaging and motivating, they're going to come."

A recent visit to three Providence elementary schools suggests that younger students with limited backgrounds in English are indeed spending a lot of time reading and writing in that language.

In a 5th grade ESL class at Asa Messer Elementary, for example, students work for the entire 50-minute period writing stories about their lives?something they do almost every day, according to their teacher, Christina A. Mannion. The students take turns sitting in the "author's chair," where she gives them one-on-one instruction.

"Did you look this word up in the dictionary?" Mannion asks student Lisanllily Sosa, pointing to the word "celebrated" on the girl's paper.

Lisanllily, a native of the Dominican Republic who moved to Providence two years ago from Boston, shakes her head no.

"Excellent job?you got it right," Mannion says.

Even in mainstream elementary classes, where students are fully fluent in English (though their first language may not be English), students are immersed daily in literacy activities.

But a visit to Central High School, one of the district's lowest-achieving secondary schools, finds much less emphasis on reading and writing. And Mossberg acknowledges that elementary teachers are doing a better job than high school teachers in integrating students whose first language isn't English into regular classes.

"When you are teaching as an elementary teacher, you have the child all day long," she says. "You are forced to meet his or her needs. In secondary, everything is departmentalized. The whole child is fragmented. There's not one person who can make sure the student is developing literacy because you're changing teachers every 50 minutes."

Felicidad Arias, a Bolivian immigrant who teaches chemistry and biology at Central High in classes especially designed for LEP students, says she finds it difficult to bring some of her students to the point where they're capable of taking regular classes.

"Some kids will go to school for two years in their own country and then stop and go to work," Arias says. "Then for some reason, they come here, and these kids, because of their age, they will go to high school. But how can you teach these kids? They don't know how to read in their own language. Where are you going to place them? They can't go to bilingual classes because they don't have the skills in Spanish."

In addition to having a poor educational background, Arias says, many of her students come from families with severe financial problems, and some students have to work to support themselves. Overall, 80 percent of the district's students qualify for a federally subsidized or free lunch.

"I tell them education is important," Arias says, "but some of them are not motivated. They need to survive, so education is not a priority."

Teacher Shortage

One of the most pressing ongoing problems in Providence in educating immigrant Latinos is keeping enough qualified teachers.

"We cannot recruit them. There's a tremendous shortage of folks out there," says Mossberg, the director of the district's language department. As a result, she says, many of those who are teaching LEP students in the district aren't actually certified to do so.

Other districts are experiencing similar problems. More than two-thirds of 40 urban districts responding to a survey conducted last year by the nonprofit group Recruiting New Teachers and the Council of the Great City Schools reported an immediate demand for certified bilingual education and ESL teachers. Eighty percent of the same districts said they permit noncredentialed teachers to teach.

The challenge in Providence is exacerbated by a city residency mandate that requires all teachers to live within city limits, something that many possible hires don't want to do.

Gonzalez, the district's equity and access administrator, says he still needs to hire teachers who are certified both in bilingual education and special education to satisfy an agreement with the U.S. Department of Education's office for civil rights that followed an investigation in the 1998-99 school year. The district had fallen behind in its obligation to identify LEP students who have disabilities and give them the special services they are entitled to by federal law.

Gonzalez has already hired bilingual specialists to form an additional team to evaluate those students and shorten the amount of time they might wait for special education services, but he hasn't been able to fill four other required positions. "We're still at risk of violating the contract through no fault of our own," he says.

No Looking Back

Educators here say that if they had the past decade to live over again, they would have moved more quickly to accommodate the population shift.

They would have provided more professional development to teachers, to help them change their philosophies and practices to better teach immigrant students. They would have hired more Spanish-speaking personnel. And they would have given the education of students with limited English abilities the attention it deserved; for too long, they say, ESL and bilingual education classrooms were tucked away in basements or other places removed from the central activity of schools.

But Hispanics are encouraged by recent developments, such as the hiring of Superintendent Lam, says Victor F. Capellan, one of two Hispanic district administrators Lam has hired since joining the district. Three of the nine members of the Providence school board are also Hispanic.

"People feel they are important?listened to," says Capellan, who runs the district's parent-information and registration center. "They're talking to the person at the top."

Gonzalez, who in 1971 was one of only six Latinos in his graduating class at Central High, says the influx of Latinos has been good for Providence.

"They've revitalized a downward spiraling community," he says. "Companies were leaving, no one wanted to live in Providence. The Latino community wants to work hard and become part of the mainstream."

Gomez-Potter, the principal at Lima Elementary School, acknowledges that not everyone in the city sees it that way. Some people still look back with nostalgia to when the communities around the schools were less poor and diverse, she says.

"I hear the comments consistently from teachers and parents: 'I remember, I remember, I remember.' And they're not remembering back 30 years ago. They're remembering back 15 years ago," Gomez-Potter says.

To them, the demographic changes automatically go hand in hand with lower academic achievement, she observes.

"But they're not believing all children can learn," the principal adds. "We need to change with the community."

On the Web

The White House's Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans has issued a number of advisory reports, including *Creating the Will: Hispanics Achieving Educational Excellence* , September 2000 (requires Adobe's Acrobat Reader), and "Our Nation on the Fault Line: Hispanic American Education," September 1996.□

The ERIC Clearinghouse has published the following digests:

- "Strategies for Success: Engaging Immigrant Students in Secondary Schools," June 2000.
- "Identifying and Assessing Gifted and Talented Bilingual Hispanic Students," September 1998.
- "Hispanic-American Students and Learning Style," May 1996.□

Equity and Access in Science Education, a project associated with West Virginia University, posts advice on teaching hispanic students.

Harvard University Civil Rights Project posts a paper addressing the crisis in latino civil rights.□

PHOTOS: Students at Asa Messer Elementary School enjoy recess on a recent fall day. As in many Providence schools, Hispanics constitute the largest ethnic or racial group of pupils at Asa Messer.
?Sevans
Providence schools Superintendent Diana Lam says the challenges facing Hispanic students in Rhode Island differ from those in her former district of San Antonio, where Latinos have lived for centuries.
?Sevans
Fifth grade teacher Christina A. Mannion works one-on-one with Carla Perez during an English-as-a-second-language class at Asa Messer Elementary School.
?Sevans

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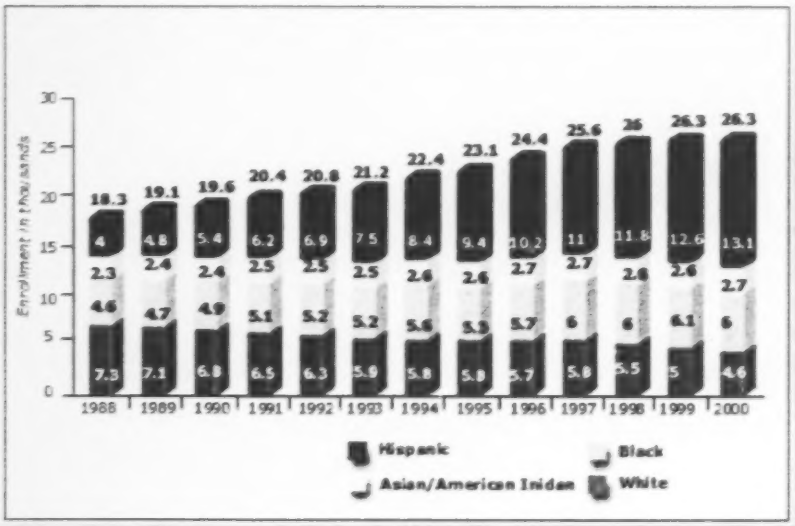
A Changing Mix

Education Week

In 1988, Hispanics constituted 22 percent of the public school students in Providence; the current figure is 50 percent. The percentage of non-Hispanic whites, meanwhile, dropped from 40 percent to 17 percent.



Note: In some cases, the enrollment figure at the top of each bar does not equal the total of the four racial/ethnic categories, because of rounding.

SOURCE: "Counting on Ourselves," The Providence Plan, 1999, and the Providence schools.

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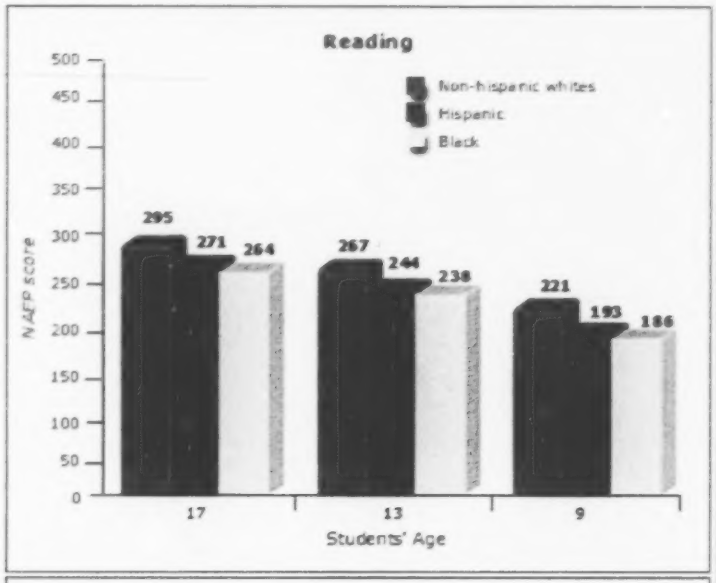
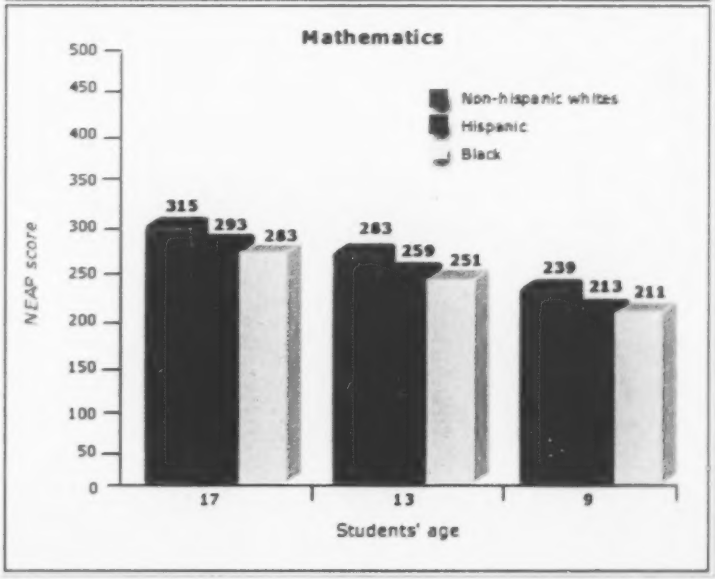
Struggling in School

Education Week

On average, Hispanic students have scored lower on the National Assessment of Educational Progress than their non-Hispanic white peers every year the tests have been given. In general, however, they have outscored black students. The results below are from the 1999 NAEP.





SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1999 Long-Term Trend Assessment.

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Uneven Growth

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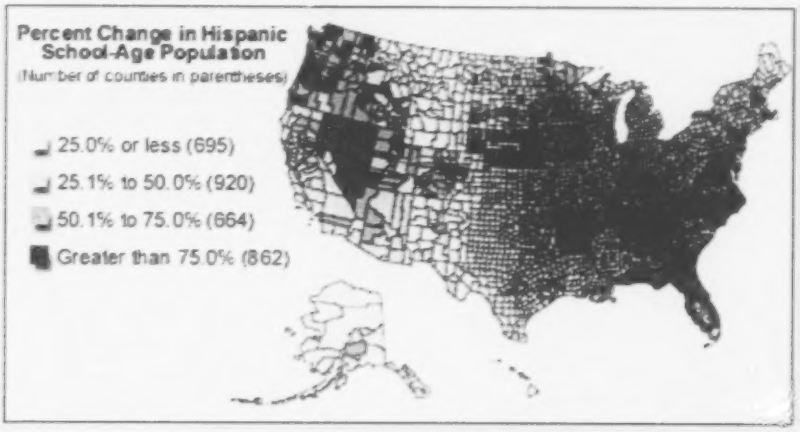
While the number of Hispanic school-age children increased throughout the nation between 1990 and 1998, the rate of growth was particularly high in the Southeast, as well as in selected counties in the Midwest, West, and Northeast.


Percent Change in Hispanic School-Age Population
(Number of counties in parentheses)
25.0% or less (695)
25.1% to 50.0% (920)
50.1% to 75.0% (664)
Greater than 75.0% (862)

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, special tabulation consistent with population estimates by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin for counties, 1990 to 1998.

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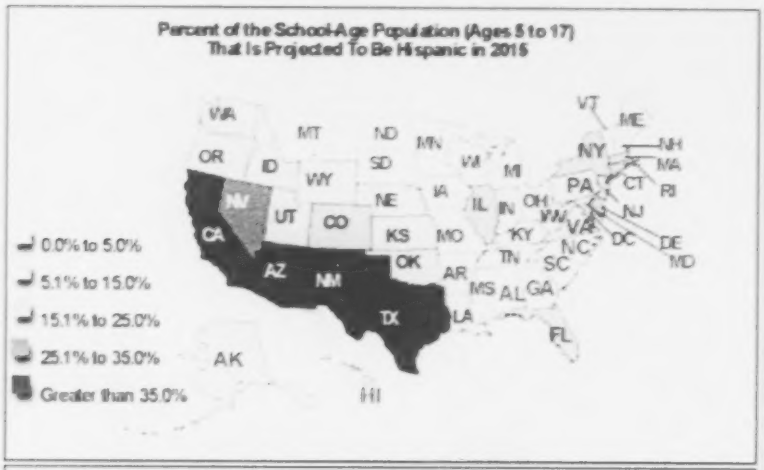
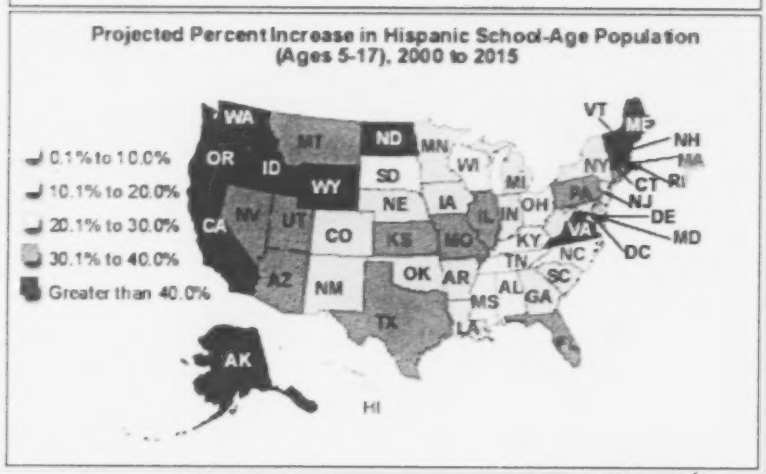
More on the Way

Education Week

Fifteen years from now, the highest concentrations of Hispanic school-age children will continue to be found in the Southwest. But other regions will see large percentage increases in the number of those students as well.





SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Series A population projections by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin for 1995 to 2025.

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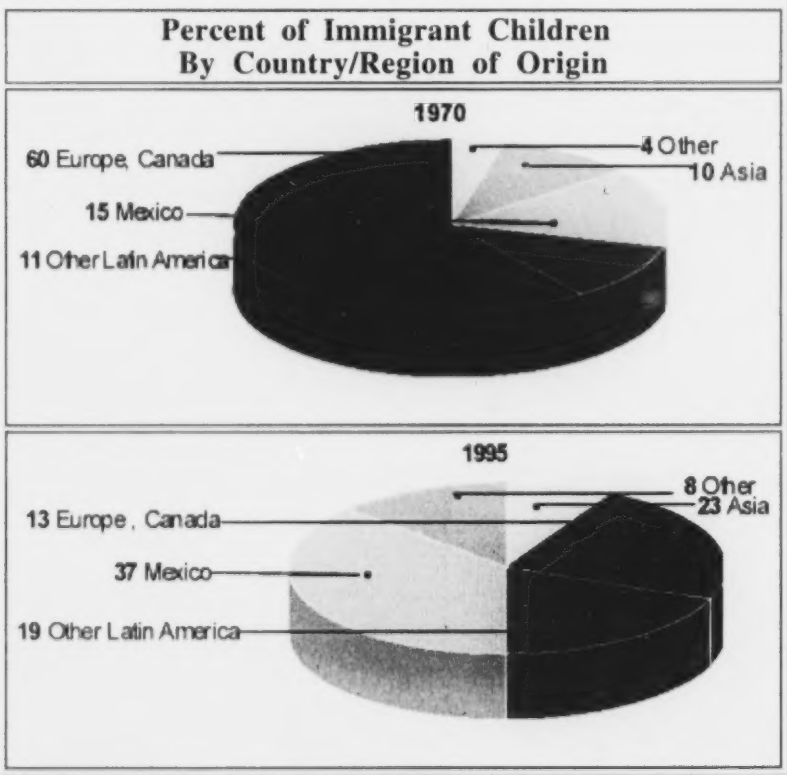
American Education's Newspaper of Record

November 8, 2000

Destino : The United States

Education Week

By 1995, Mexico and other Latin American countries accounted for a much larger share of the total population of immigrant children than was the case a quarter- century earlier.



SOURCE: The Urban Institute, unpublished analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data from the 1970, 1980, 1990 1% Public Use Micro Samples, and the 1995 and 1997 October Current Population Surveys.

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Dropping Out

Education Week

Hispanic students ages 16 to 24 are about four times as likely to be out of school without a diploma than their non-Hispanic white peers, and more than twice as likely as black students.

Percent of High School Dropouts Among 16- 24 Year Olds			
Year	**White**	**Black**	**Hispanic**
1970[1]	13.2	27.9	–
1980	11.4	19.1	35.2
1985	10.4	15.2	27.6
1990	9.0	13.2	32.4
1992[2]	7.7	13.7	29.4
1993[2]	7.9	13.6	27.5
1994[2]	7.7	12.6	30.0
1995[2]	8.6	12.1	30.0
1996[2]	7.3	13.0	29.4
1997[2]	7.6	13.4	25.3
1998[2]	7.7	13.8	29.5

Notes: [1]White and black categories include persons of Hispanic origin for this year only.

[2]Because of changes in data-collection procedures, data may not be comparable with figures for earlier years.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, Digest of Education Statistics, 1999.

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A Bilingual Day in the Life

By Mary Ann Zehr
Education Week

Providence, R.I.
Juan Infante props his lanky frame on a stool in the auditorium of Central High School here to pose for his senior-class picture. First, he folds his arms and grins, then rests his chin on his fist, looking serious and reflective. The 18-year-old immigrant from the Dominican Republic relishes the experience as a sign that high school will soon be ending.

"It feels good to be leaving," he says.

But unlike many of his Hispanic peers, Infante will do so with a diploma.

Nationally, Latino youths born outside the country are twice as likely to be out of school and not have a high school diploma as those born in the United States. Providence's Central High, 56 percent of whose 1,700 students are Hispanic, doesn't track its dropout statistics by those categories, but its overall dropout rate is 44 percent.

Bucking that trend, as Infante has done, has meant keeping one foot in the world of Spanish and one in the world of English.

When he arrived in the United States three years ago, he says, "I didn't know a clue of English." At home, he still speaks only Spanish with his parents.

2000 beyond
The Changing Face Of American Schools

Un Día Nuevo For Schools

Overview

Un Día Nuevo for Schools, (includes:
▶ A Bilingual Day in the Life)

A Passage From India

As a 9th grader, Infante enrolled in the bilingual education track at Central. Each year, he took fewer bilingual education courses and more courses taught only in English. Though he'll still be labeled "limited English proficient" when he graduates, four of his six classes this year are regular classes, not LEP classes, and all are taught in English. He generally gets B's, except in Algebra 2, which he is struggling to pass.

Infante now speaks English fluently, and it's become his official language at school. Whenever Infante asks a question in class or makes a presentation, for example, he does so in English.

But while making any conversation with his classmates that's not meant especially for a teacher, he speaks Spanish. All day long, as he walks the school's halls or sprints up and down its stairwells, Infante chats and jokes with his friends in his native language.

"I know when to speak Englishówhen there are English-speakers around me," he explains. "It's not fair for them to be out of the conversation. The Spanish part is with my regular friends."

In every class, he gravitates to students who are Spanish-speaking. In Algebra 2, for instance, he sits at a table with a girl from Guatemala, who came to the United States five years ago, and one from the Dominican Republic, who immigrated three years ago. Meanwhile, at some of the other tables, students are talking in English.

No Spanish Allowed

Advanced ESL is the only class during which Infante doesn't speak in Spanish at all. The teacher won't permit it.

"At this level, I say, 'No Spanish,'" the teacher, Lynne I. Edmonds, says. "I think a lot of the students don't speak English all dayóI know they speak a lot of Spanish."

Even in classes designed for limited-English-proficient students, some high schoolers feel embarrassed to practice their English, says Felicidad Arias, a Bolivian immigrant who teaches chemistry and biology in such classes at Central. "I force them. I tell them, if they don't learn English, how are they going to succeed?"

During the lunch hour, Arias adds, students typically segregate themselves according to their countries of origin. "They don't want to speak English, because they are afraid they will make mistakes and people will laugh at them," she surmises.

Central High's large concentration of Hispanics makes it easier for LEP students to avoid speaking English.

In that respect, the school is not unusual. The typical Hispanic student in the United States attends a school where 53 percent of the students are also Hispanic, according to researchers at the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University. And nearly half of the nation's LEP students attend schools that have a LEP population of at least 30 percent, according to the Urban Institute, a Washington think tank.

Infante agrees that many of his friends are reluctant to speak English, but he doesn't share that fear.

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He hangs around Spanish-speakers because they're the students he knows best, he says. But he would prefer if they all spoke more English.

"If I'm in a class, I like them to speak with me in English, but sometimes they can't," Infante says.

He counts having learned English as one of the most important tools Central has given him.

Upon graduation next spring, Infante hopes to join the U.S. Army and apply to be a military policeman, with the goal of eventually becoming a civilian police officer.

He views education as his future. "To be a police, you have to go to college to study law enforcement," Infante says. "For me to go to college, I need a high school diploma."

PHOTOS: Juan Infante didn't know any English when he immigrated here three years ago; now he's fluent in the language.
óSevans

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Education Week

American Education's Newspaper of Record

November 8, 2000

A Passage From India

By Jessica L. Sandham
Education Week

Fremont, Calif.
In his native India, Srinivas Majji could afford to send his two children to a private, English-language school with the money he earned as an engineer. But in a country with almost 1 billion residents, he says, the competition for career and educational opportunities can be fierceóeven among the upper classes. So Majji decided to move here to Silicon Valley through an immigration program that allows skilled foreign workers to take U.S. jobs in fields where there are critical labor shortages, such as technology. He quickly landed a position with a software company.

2000 beyond
The Changing Face Of American Schools

***Un Dìa Nuevo* For Schools**

Overview

Un Dìa Nuevo for Schools, (includes: A Bilingual Day in the Life)

▶ A Passage From India

"I think the U.S. is the land of opportunities," Majji says. "My kids can choose their way here. In India, we would dream about our kids' becoming doctors. Here, the education system drives the dream."

Majji's affluent background and link to the technology industry are typical of many recent Indian immigrants, though not all. The United States also is seeing an increase in the number of working-class Indians who are coming to this country through connections to family members who have already settled here.

"They tend to be less well-off," says Susan Koshy, an assistant professor in Asian-American studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. "What we're seeing now is a peer demarcation between the more affluent and the working- class Indian population."

But regardless of their social or economic standing, Indian immigrants seem to have one trait in common: They consider school a top priority.

"The parents put a lot of emphasis on education, and for most of them, college is a given," says Shalini Choudhry, a senior language- assessment technician for California's 31,200-student Fremont Unified School District. "There's no question. They come in at whatever level, but parents expect that their children will be successful in school."

Rapid Growth

With little fanfare, India has become one of the United States' largest sources of immigrants in recent years. It ranked sixth among the countries of origin for U.S. immigration in 1999, after Mexico, the Philippines, Vietnam, Cuba, and China.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of foreign-born immigrants from India rose 124 percent, from 450,000 to 1 million--a higher rate of growth than for any other Asian nation. A major reason is the number of Indians who, like Majji, have received six-year visas through the H1-B immigration program. Indians accounted for 43 percent of all H1-B visas issued between October 1999 and February 2000--the largest share by far of any country, according to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

FREMONT (CALIF.)† UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

- **Enrollment:** 31,200□
- **Student profile:** 42 percent non-Hispanic white, 38 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 14 percent Hispanic, 4 percent African-American, 1 percent American Indian/Native Alaskan□
- **Percentage of students who receive free or reduced-price meals:** 18.7□
- **Superintendent:** Sharon Belshaw-Jones

And their numbers are expected to continue to rise. Last month, President Clinton signed into law a measure that will increase the limit on H-1B visas from 115,000 a year to 195,000 a year for the next three years.

But despite their growing presence, relatively little is known about Indian immigrants and how they're adapting to American schools.

"The public consciousness about who Indians are and where they come from is much more amorphous than it is about other immigrant groups," Koshy says.

No state has been affected by the recent wave of Indian immigrants as much as California. Here in Fremont, Choudhry says, the schools enroll Indian students from both working-class and more affluent families.

Generally speaking, Choudhry says, people coming from the region of Punjab in northwest India are less well-off and more likely to have limited English skills than immigrants from other parts of the country. (However, she adds, even those working-class families tend to be more financially secure than some other immigrant groups in the district, such as Hispanics.) Of the 538 Indian students in Fremont who were identified by the district as being limited in their knowledge of English, more than half listed Punjabi as their home language.

But some children from better-off families who attended English- speaking schools in India also come to the district with a range of language abilities.

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At the district's language-assessment center one day this fall, a recent immigrant and H-1B visa recipient expresses concern when he learns that his daughter will be placed with a teacher who had received specialized training in teaching students with limited English skills. His son, meanwhile, who is several years older, is considered to be fluent in English. Both children had attended an English-language school in India.

Such variations are common, Choudhry says. "Even though both students were in good schools, the little ones tend to speak less English at school and speak their home language at home," she says. "The older ones tend to be more English-fluent."

Great Expectations

While no general descriptions can adequately cover everyone in a particular community, some educators here say that the overwhelming majority of the Indian families they deal with share key values that enhance their children's school experiences. Among those values, they say, are a reverence for education and a disciplined approach to work.

Chris Hertz, the principal of Fremont's Warwick Elementary School, says he has been impressed with how polite Indian families have been to himóeven when he had to tell one family he had no choice but to send their child to another school because no more classroom space was available.

"I can't think of another group who has talked to me in such a respectful way," Hertz says. "I know this is stereotypical, but I can't help but have this impression. These children are motivated, and their parents are motivated."

Indian students, for their part, seem to gripe somewhat about the high standards their parents set for them, even as they try to rise to meet them. Eveleen Bhasin, a senior at John F. Kennedy High School who moved here from India when she was 4, said that, to her parents, "a B is like a D or F."

"It would be disappointing to them if I didn't do well," Bhasin says.

Amandeep Lal, a 15-year-old student at Kennedy who came to the United States from the Punjab region in 1995, said many Indian parents are motivated by a desire to give their children a better education and more career opportunities than they themselves received.

"I learned English here, and it was hard," Amandeep says. "I didn't know anything at first, but I got it after a while. Now my parents say, 'Study, study, study, so you can be a doctor.' "

Relationship Issues

Indian students interviewed here tend to share another characteristic that affects their educational experience: Their parents usually discourage them from getting involved in romantic relationships until they are much older.

Renu Bhargava, who has an 11-year-old daughter in 6th grade, as well as a daughter who is a senior in high school and a son who recently graduated, says that in India, relationships between girls and boys are not encouraged until they are "more mature." For that reason, she explains, she often feels uncomfortable with the coed dances and other social events that are a part of the traditional coming-of-age experience for American teenagers.

"Prom night, junior high dances--it's a huge concern for us," Bhargava says. "A lot of conflict happens with kids when they start wanting to go to these dances. They feel isolated, but the parents feel torn."

Ultimately, Bhargava says, she allowed her son to attend his senior prom, "even though I was very uncomfortable with it."

Shezad Lakhani, a sophomore at Kennedy High, says Indian students should take their parents' values to heart.

"I used to play a lot of sports in India, but now I just go home and study," says Lakhani, who moved here with his parents from Bombay three years ago. "They think that you should exploit all the opportunities you can get, and then live your life.

"They think education should come first," he adds, "and they're right."

On the Web

"Learning Limits," from *Asian Week* , March 16, 2000, discusses how Fremont's redrawn school boundaries pitted Asian American parents against the school district, and resulted in a lawsuit, later dropped ("School Boundaries Suits Dropped," June 2000).

"India Natives Find Success in Valley," *USA Today* , Jan 26, 1999.

"The Indians of Silicon Valley," *Fortune* magazine, May 15, 2000. For immigrants, the Bay Area offers Hindi films, assimilation classes, and even a Gandhi district.□

"Asian-American Children: What Teachers Should Know," ERIC Digest, 1994.

PHOTOS: Shalini Choudhry, a senior language-assessment technician for the Fremont, Calif., public schools, explains some paperwork to recent Indian immigrant Srinivas Paladugu as his son, Manoj Sainaga Paladugu, looks on.

óBenjamin Tice Smith

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Education Week

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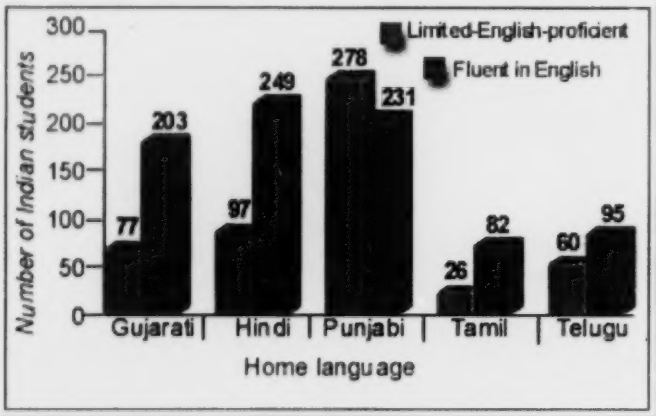
November 8, 2000

One Nation, Many Languages

Education Week

While many native-born Indian students already know English when they emigrate to the United States, many others, particularly those from the region of Punjab, do not. In Fremont, Calif., more than half the 538 Indian students with limited proficiency in English identified Punjabi as their home language.



SOURCE: Fremont Unified School District.

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http://www.edweek.org/ew/ew_printstory.cfm?slug=10indchart1.h20